

ATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1984

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Reagan Weighs Major Speech on Soviet

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6 — President Reagan, sensing the Soviet Union is in a period of "introspection," is considering a major speech to invite an improvement in East-West relations, Administration officials said today.

The President alluded to the need for "a productive East-West dialogue" in a brief statement this morning on the mission of James E. Goodby, the chief United States delegate to a conference on confidence and security opening Jan. 18 in Stockholm among ministers of North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Pact.

Secretary of State George P. Shultz and Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko of the Soviet Union have agreed to meet at the conference to resume talks that were broken off after the Soviet Union shot down a South Korean airliner in September, with the loss of 269 lives.

White House officials said the President was considering making "a comprehensive statement" of his views on the Soviet Union, timed either for the meeting between Mr. Shultz and Mr. Gromyko or possibly as the key foreign policy section of his State of Union address on Jan. 25.

Moderation Emphasized

Such a statement, issued as the President prepared for his expected reelection bid, would presumably be moderate in tone. The President has emphasized moderation in recent interviews, dropping his earlier criticism of the Soviet Union as a "focus of evil," and has called on Moscow to "join the family of nations."

"The President is ready to deal with them," an Administration official said, noting that Mr. Reagan felt his defense buildup plans were now well along to being carried out. "The question is whether they're 'capable of dealing with him.'"

The official said Mr. Reagan sensed an opportunity to speak out during what he considers a mood of "introspection" in Moscow attributable to several factors besides the illness of the Soviet leader, Yuri V. Andropov.

"They failed to achieve a lot of their goals last year," the White House official said, referring to what he called "heavy handed" Soviet attempts to split the NATO alliance over the deployment of new United States nuclear missiles in Europe. "Also, the Soviet economy is not working well. It's not the model for the third world that they'd like."

President Reagan met for 15 minutes with Mr. Goodby in advance of the 35-nation Stockholm meeting, which is to focus on ways of reducing the risk of nonnuclear attack between the East and West in Europe.

"I reviewed with Ambassador Goodby the instructions to the U.S.

delegation and gave my final approval," the President said in a printed statement.

Mr. Goodby later said that his instructions "require that the United States delegation search for agreements on concrete, practical measures to reduce the risk of war in Europe arising from surprise attack or miscalculation."

The conference agenda includes ways of improving communication between Eastern and Western military commanders, including advance notice of military training maneuvers and observation of each other's exercises.

The Stockholm meeting, formally titled the Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, is not directly connected with the nuclear and conventional arms control talks that are currently suspended. One of Mr. Shultz's priorities is expected to be the question of when these talks might be resumed.

No Timetable for Agreement

Mr. Goodby said the Stockholm meeting was "not a substitute" for the arms control talks but could serve as an "important channel" in improving relations between East and West.

He said the conference, an outgrowth of the 1975 meeting that produced the Helsinki East-West accords, had no timetable for an agreement. "We think we can make a lot of progress over the next several months," he added.

If the President chooses to make a speech on Soviet policy, it would be done apart from an Administration report to Congress expected soon assessing how well the Russians have adhered to existing agreements.

Some officials who expect this report to contain detailed criticism of the Soviets, feel that the President's address, if it takes place, would take a

larger perspective.

"A lot of people in the Administration believe now is the time for the President to make a comprehensive statement of his Soviet views," one White House official said, asserting that these were far more complicated in substance and far less aggressive in tone than his critics contend.

